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S P L E N D I D S H I L L I N G

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A T T E M P T E D

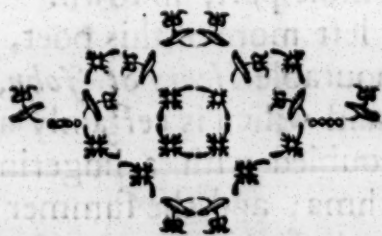
In the S T Y L E of M I L T O N

B Y
M R . J O H N P H I L I P S ,

Student of C H R I S T - C H U R C H , O X O N ,

T O W H I C H I S A D D E D ,
A S H O R T S K E T C H

O F H I S
L I F E and W R I T I N G S .



L O N D O N :
Printed for S. SMITH, in West-Smithfield, 1771.
[Price ONE PENNY.]

A

SKETCH of the LIFE of Mr. JOHN PHILIPS.

HE was the son of Dr. *Stephen Philips*, Archdeacon of *Salop*, born at *Bampton*, in *Oxfordshire*, December 30, 1676. After he was well grounded in grammar-learning, he was sent to *Winchester School*, where he made himself master of the *Greek* and *Latin* languages; and from thence was removed to *Christ-Church, Oxford*. All his university exercises were received with applause: and in that place so famous for good sense and true spirit, he, in a short time, grew to be superior to most of his cotemporaries.

As to his private character, he was beloved by all who knew him; somewhat reserved and silent among strangers, but free, familiar, and easy with his friends.

The first of his works was the *Splendid Shilling*, a title as new and uncommon for a Poem, as his way of adorning it was, and which, in the opinion of one of the best and most unprejudiced judges of this age, is the finest Burlesque Poem in the *British language*.

The next of his poems was that entituled *Blenheim*; in which he shews, that he could use the same sublime and nervous style as properly on a serious and heroick subject, as on one of a more light and ludicrous nature.

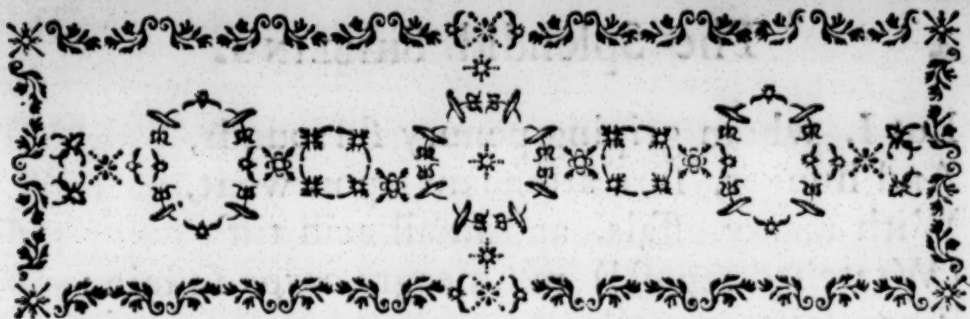
As to his *Cyder*, it is the only finished poem, of that length, extant in our language. The foundation of this work was laid, and the first book was composed at *Oxford*: the second, for the most part, in town.

All that we have left more of this poet, is a *Latin Ode*, inscribed to the honourable *Henry St. John*, late Lord Viscount *Bolingbroke*; and which is certainly a master-piece.

He was long troubled with a lingering consumption attended with an asthma; and the summer before he died, by the advice of his physicians, removed to *Bath*, where, altho' he had the assistance of the ablest of the faculty, by whom he was generally beloved, he only got some present ease; and, upon the return of his distempers, he died at *Hereford*, aged 32, Feb. 15, 1708; and was interred in the cathedral there, with a *Latin* inscription on his grave-stone.

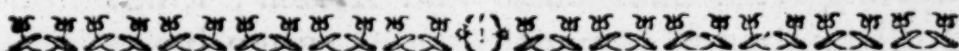
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T H E

SPLENDID SHILLING.

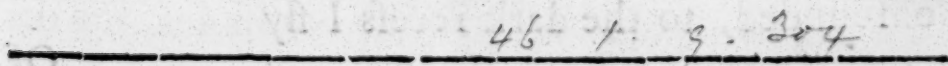


————— *Sing, Heavenly Muse,*
Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme,
A Shilling, Breeches, and Chimeras dire.

HAPPY the Man, who void of Cares and
 Strife,
 In filken, or in leathern Purse retains
 A *Splendid Shilling*: He nor hears with pain
 New Oysters cry'd, nor sighs for cheerful Ale:
 But with his friends, when nightly mists arise,
 To *Jun'per's Magpye*, or *Town-Hall* * repairs:
 Where, mindful of the nymph, whose wanton eye
 Transfix'd his soul, and kindled amorous flames,
Chloe, or *Phillis*; he each circling glass
 Wisheth her health, and joy, and equal love.
 Mean while he smokes, and laughs at merry tale,
 Or pun ambiguous, or conundrum quaint.

A 2

But



* Two noted Alehouses in Oxford, 1700.

But I, whom griping penury surrounds,
 And hunger, sure attendant upon want,
 With scanty offals, and small acid tiff
 (Wretched repast!) my meagre corps sustain:
 Then solitary walk, or doze at home
 In garret vile, and with a warming puff
 Regale chill'd fingers; or from tube as black
 As winter-chimney, or well polish'd jet,
 Exhale *mundungus*, ill-perfuming scent:
 Not blacker tube, nor of a shorter size
 Smokes *Cambro-Briton* (vers'd in pedigree,
 Sprung from *Cadwaladar* and *Arthur*, kings
 Full famous in romantick tale) when he
 O'er many a craggy hill and barren cliff,
 Upon a cargo of fam'd *Cestrian* cheese,
 High over-shadowing rides, with a design
 To vend his wares, or at th' *Arvonian* mart,
 Or *Maridunum*, or the antient town
 Yclip'd *Brechinia*, or where *Vaga's* stream
 Encircles *Ariconium*, fruitful soil!
 Whence flow nectareous wines, that well may vie
 With *Massic*, *Setin*, or renown'd *Falern*.

Thus while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
 With looks demure, and silent pace, a *Dun*,
 Horrible monster! hated by Gods and men,
 To my ærial citadel ascends;
 With vocal heel thrice thund'ring at my gate,
 With hideous accent thrice he calls: I know
 The voice ill-boding, and the solemn sound.
 What should I do? or whither turn? Amaz'd,
 Confounded, to the dark recess I fly

Of

Of wood-hole ; strait my bristling hairs erect
Thro' sudden fear ; a chilly sweat bedews
My shuddering limbs ; and (wonderful to tell !)
My tongue forgets her faculty of speech ;
So horrible he seems ! His faded brow
Entrench'd with many a frown, and conic beard,
And spreading band, admir'd by modern saints,
Disastrous acts forbode : In his right hand
Long scrolls of paper solemnly he waves,
With characters, and figures dire inscrib'd,
Grievous to mortal eyes ; (ye Gods, avert
Such plagues from righteous men !) Behind him
stalks

Another monster, not unlike himself,
Sullen of aspect, by the vulgar call'd
A *Catchpole* ; whose polluted hands the Gods
With force incredible, and magick charms,
Erst have endu'd : If he his ample palm
Should haply on ill-fated shoulder lay
Of Debtor, strait his body, to the touch
Obsequious, (as whilom knights were wont)
To some enchanted castle is convey'd,
Where gates impregnable, and coercive chains,
In durance strict detain him, till in form
Of money, *Pallas* sets the captive free.

Beware, ye Debtors ! when ye walk, beware,
Be circumspect ; oft with insidious ken
This caitiff eyes your steps aloof, and oft
Lies perdue in a nook or gloomy cave,
Prompt to enchant some inadvertent wretch
With his unhallow'd touch. So (poets sing)
Grimalkin

Grimalkin to domestick vermin sworn
 An everlasting foe, with watchful eye
 Lies nightly brooding o'er a chinky gap,
 Protending her fell claws, to thoughtless mice
 Sure ruin. So her disembowell'd web
Arachne in a hall or kitchen spreads,
 Obvious to vagrant flies : She secret stands
 Within her woven cell ; the humming prey,
 Regardless of their fate, rush on the toils
 Inextricable, nor will aught avail
 Their arts, or arms, or shapes of lovely hue :
 The wasp insidious, and the buzzing drone,
 And butterfly proud of expanded wings
 Distinct with gold, entangled in her snares,
 Useless resistance make : With eager strides,
 She tow'ring flies to her unexpected spoils ;
 Then, with envenom'd jaws, the vital blood
 Drinks of reluctant foes, and to her cave
 Their bulky carcases triumphant drags.

So pass my days. But when nocturnal shades
 This world envelop, and th' inclement air
 Persuades men to repel benumbing frosts
 With pleasant wines, and crackling blaze of wood ;
 Me, lonely sitting, nor the glimmering light
 Of make-weight candle, nor the joyous talk
 Of loving friends delights ; distress'd, forlorn,
 Amidst the horrors of the tedious night,
 Darkling I sigh, and feed with dismal thought
 My anxious mind ; or sometimes mournful verse
 Indite, and sing of groves and myrtle shades,
 Or desperate lady near a purling stream,

The Splendid SHILLING.

7

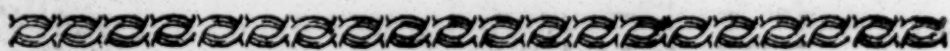
Or lover pendent on a willow-tree.
Mean while I labour with eternal drought,
And restless wish and rave; my parched throat
Finds no relief, nor heavy eyes repose:
But if a slumber haply does invade
My weary limbs, my fancy, still awake,
Thoughtful of drink and eager, in a dream
Tipples imaginary pots of ale,
In vain; awake I find the settled thirst
Still gnawing, and the pleasant fantom curse.

Thus do I live, from pleasure quite debarr'd,
Nor taste the fruits that the sun's genial rays
Mature; John-Apple, nor the downy Peach,
Nor Walnut in rough furrow'd coat secure,
Nor Medlar, fruit delicious in decay:
Afflictions great! yet greater still remain.
My *Galligaskins* that have long withstood
The winter's fury, and incroaching frosts,
By time subdu'd, (what will not time subdue!)
An horrid chasm disclose, with orifice
Wide, discontinuous; at which the winds
Eurus and *Auster*, and the dreadful force
Of *Boreas*, that congeals the *Cronian* waves,
Tumultuous enter with dire chilling blasts,
Portending agues. Thus a well-fraught ship
Long sail'd secure or thro' th' *Ægean* deep,
Or the *Ionian*, till cruising near
The *Lilybean* shore, with hideous crush
On *Scylla* or *Charybdis*, (dangerous rocks!)
She strikes rebounding; whence the shatter'd oak,
So fierce a shock unable to withstand,

Admits

The Splendid SHILLING.

Admits the sea; in at the gaping side
 The crouding waves gush with impetuous rage,
 Resistless, overwhelming: Horrors seize
 The mariners, Death in their eyes appears;
 They stare, they lave, they pump, they swear, they
 pray:
 Vain efforts! still the battering waves rush in
 Implacable, till, delug'd by the foam,
 The ship sinks found'ring in the vast abyfs.



THERE is a monument in *Westminster Abbey*,
 erected to the memory of Mr. *Philips* by Sir
Simon Harcourt. It stands between the monu-
 ments of *Chaucer* and *Drayton*; and is a neat
 busto in profile, with this motto:

Honos erit huic quoque pomo? VIRG.

This honour was so much the greater, as it
 proceeded from one, who knew as well to dis-
 tinguish men as to excel them; and dealt out the
 marks of his respect as impartially as the awards
 of his justice. The epitaph was written by Dr.
Atterbury, in a spirit and style peculiar to his
 compositions.

F I N I S



